

14 Leadership Trends That Will Shape Organizations In 2018



Forbes Coaches Council



There's no "right" way to be a leader. Everyone who steps into a management or executive role has a different style of motivating and guiding people, and effective leadership means finding the way that works best for both you and your team.

Good leaders also know when it's time to adjust their approach, and are able to adapt to the ever-changing demands of the workforce. We asked 14 members of [Forbes Coaches Council](#) to share their insights on the biggest and most influential leadership and management trends of 2018.

1. Encouraging All Team Members To Be Brand Ambassadors

Leaders are starting to recognize that every employee is an opportunity to provide the market insights into the culture, quality and standards of the organization. By leveraging social media, particularly LinkedIn, every employee can become an ambassador. Those messages can be hugely amplified by the employees. It's effectively free PR but more powerful, because it's authentic and believable.

– (Vision, Mission, Values, Purpose)

2. Investing In Human Capital Development

Leaders and companies will recognize the long-term benefit of focusing on human capital development. Taking a vested interest in helping employees thrive in all areas of their lives (not just work), will create more engagement, productivity and overall happier employees.

– (Capability and Capacity Planning)

3. Increasing Emphasis On Empathetic Leadership

Value-driven Gen Y and Gen Z talent will continue to leave command-and-control cultures for collaborative workplaces. The value of leadership empathy will be sky-high in 2018. The ability to understand, relate to and be sensitive to employees, colleagues and communities will be paramount. We will see an even greater emphasis on listening, relating and coaching to drive effective leadership.

– (Is Social Media Driving More Sensitivity)

4. Focusing On Individual Growth

With so much focus on diversity and inclusion, we may have overlooked the value and power of separation. I say 2018 will be the year of individual growth. The steady stream of dramatic events in 2017 have forced us all to ask some tough questions about life, and I think many will turn to their employers for help and support in clarifying one's purpose and how to actualize one's full potential.

– (Our Staff Expect More Leadership)

5. Leading By Actions And Examples

Leaders have long gotten away with vocally supporting policies and procedures, but their actions say otherwise. That tide will turn. With so much light being shed on unacceptable behavior in all workplaces, leaders will begin to understand they need to not only hold their teams accountable for proper behavior, but hold themselves accountable as well. – (The Organization Is More Float)

6. Turning Organizations Into A Truly Customer-Centric Business

While leaders have been discussing being "customer-centered" or "customer- focused" for a while, in 2018 it's time to walk the talk. With robust customer feedback mechanisms and reporting, there is simply no excuse for not adapting to what customers really want today. Customers are no longer loyal to a brand, they're loyal to experiences that work for them. Talking is not enough. It's time to act. – (Customer Expectations are Higher)

7. Embracing 'Work-Life Blend'

Industry leaders, such as Apple and Amazon, are recognizing how working from home helps acquire and retain top talent. But this is just one part of the equation. In 2018, companies will recognize that work-life blend is key. They won't just opt for bean bag chairs and ping pong tables, but create jobs and schedules that allow staff to better blend their work and lives to reduce burnout and increase output.

– (Technology Brings The Ability to Work From Home or Anywhere)

8. Paying Attention To Internal Factors That Are In Their Control

To make better decisions, we crave certainty. However, smart leaders I work with are recognizing nothing's certain in the outside world. In 2018, the winners will be those who redirect their attention to what's happening inside their organizations, getting clear on who they want to be and what success looks like.

Focusing first on what's in their control will help them make decisions that matter. –
(Everyone Contributes)

9. Taking Workplace Sexual Harassment More Seriously

The end of 2017 saw a rise in the #MeToo movement. I believe that more employers will be less tolerant of sexual harassment in the workplace and will work to deal with claims more seriously to set the tone for their organization.

– (Greater Media Attention)

10. Implementing Agile Talent

With the rise in freelancers and remote work, companies will be moving more towards the implementation of policies and procedures to work with agile talent. Organizations will need to train their managers to effectively onboard and utilize the agile talent to complete projects more efficiently while maintaining a strong organizational culture. – (Expectations are higher that we all be faster and efficient)

11. Seek Outside Consultants

Many companies are great at in-house training and coaching, and there is great value in working in the same environment as your coach or mentor. However, it's oftentimes difficult to be objective when you are seeing the same people every day. Your perception gets clouded and it becomes hard to be impartial around team challenges or feedback. Having an independent outsider helps all gain clarity. – (Is That the Purpose of Associations, CoSN, TASBO, etc.)

12. Promoting Continuous Education

As the business landscape persistently grows in competitive intensity, every organizational member must be smarter. Therefore, continuous learning will be at the forefront of management's agenda to gain and sustain a competitive advantage. Learning will not be confined to formal training performed within the business. Learning will extend to a growing number of online micro-learning platforms. (The Technology Changes – We must offer education and cross training)